

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as follows:

The paragraph beginning on pg. 2 and ending on pg. 3 is amended as follows:

This object is achieved in accordance with the invention by a communications network ~~according to the theory of Claim 1~~, a process for making available connection data ~~according to the theory of Claim 2~~, a process for determining path information ~~according to the theory of Claim 3~~, a network node for a lower network level ~~according to the theory of Claim 4 and according to the theory of Claim 5~~, and a network node for a higher network level ~~according to the theory of Claim 6~~.

Pg. 3, please delete the paragraph at lines 7-14 in its entirety and insert the following:

--This object is achieved according to the invention by a communications network for exchanging data packets of ATM connections, which is hierarchically constructed to include:

a plurality of network nodes in a lowest network level, the nodes being in each case directly or indirectly connected, by at least one possible physical path, on the one hand to terminal devices and on the other hand to every other network node of the same network level,

a plurality of network nodes in a higher network levels, which are in each case administratively responsible for a peer group of network nodes situated in an underlying network level, each network node situated in a higher network level being physically

connected to at least one network node of the group for which it is responsible and being logically connected to every other network node of this group and to every other network node of the group to which it itself belongs, each network node of a higher network level being responsible for providing that each network node of a lower network level for which it is responsible can when necessary use the connection data which it requires to determine the path information for the data packets of a concrete ATM connection in this communications network, and

said communications network further including a data bank (DB), in which connection data are kept available, arranged in network nodes of a lower network level, each data bank in a network node of a lower network level keeping available connection data for a closer environment, with at least one additional data bank, which keeps available connection data for a wider environment, being provided and assigned to a network node, with the network node of a higher network level which is responsible for a network node to which an additional data bank is assigned also comprising means for maintaining the connection data in this additional data bank.

The object of the invention is further attained by a process for making available connection data for determining path information for the data packets of ATM connections in such a communications network.

The object of the invention is still further attained by a process for determining path information for the data packets of ATM connections in a network node of such a communications network, wherein connection data are called up from a data bank assigned to a

network node of the lower network level, and wherein the connection data which cannot be called up from the data bank assigned to the network node are called up from an additional data bank which is assigned to another network node.

The object of the invention is still further attained by network nodes for a lower network level of such a communications network, wherein the data bank keeps available connection data for a closer environment and the network node comprises interrogation means by which the connection data for a wider environment can be called up from an additional data bank which is assigned to another network node.

The object of the invention is yet further attained by a network node for a lower network level of such a communications network, wherein the lower level network node to which the additional data bank is assigned comprises means whereby connection data from the additional data bank can be emitted to other network nodes upon request.

Finally, the object of the invention is attained by network nodes for a higher network level of such a communications network, wherein the network node comprises means for supporting the exchange of connection data between data banks in network nodes for which this network node is responsible and data banks in other network nodes for maintaining the respective stored data.--